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Gold King Mine Lessons Learned Interview Summary

Person Interviewed: Stacey Mitchell

Interviewers: Mary Kay Lynch in person in EPA HQ, Allyn Stern by phone in Seattle

Date: November 17, 2015

Time: 1:30 – 2:30 EST

Mary Kay Lynch and Allyn Stern interviewed Stacey Mitchell as part of an internal EPA After-Action review of the Agency's response to the release at Gold King Mine in Colorado on August 5, 2015. Stacey is Deputy General Counsel in EPA's Office of General Counsel. The focus of this review is on EPA's response activities beginning with the events immediately following the release on August 5. The goal is to identify lessons learned to assist the Agency in improving procedures, processes, and guidance.

Synopsis of interview:

Stacey's role was to provide legal advice, review congressional responses, and participate in senior level calls that provided updates on EPA's actions to respond to the release. Her involvement began on the morning of 9/7/15, when Stacey received an email from Bob Ward, Regional Counsel in Region 8 with a link to a news story. This was the first she heard of the incident. Beginning that weekend, approximately 9/8/15, she started participating in more regular conference calls with EPA senior leaders about a variety of issues relating to EPA's response to the release. On the calls, she was at first just in listening mode and then legal issues began to arise. Early on, people were asking about the claims. John Michaud and R. 8 ORC were the lead in responding to legal questions. Stacey pulled the OGC Associates together to get their input on issues that might arise. She also played an active role in helping to get documents out to Congress, the media, and the public more quickly. A couple of the issues raised early on were whether other sites were in a similar phase of investigation. If so, were there lessons learned at GKM that could apply to other sites. (b) (5) ACP

[REDACTED]

(b) (5) DPP, (b) (5) ACP

[REDACTED]

LESSONS LEARNED

- (b) (5) DPP [REDACTED]